Slide 1

MICHIGAN

OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

AUDIT REPORT

PERFORMANCE AUDIT
OF THE
BRIDGE INSPECTION PROGRAM
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

November 2009

Thomas H. McTavish, C.P.A.
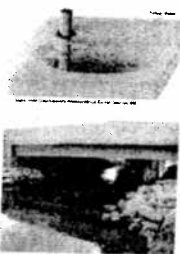Auditor General

Slide 2

Audit Purpose:
"Finding Opportunities for Improvement"

- This is why we do audits, to help improve our processes and efficiency. We always welcome potential ways to provide better service to our customers.

- The Federal Highway Administration, made up of civil engineers who oversee our work, agrees with our processes and has said repeatedly that we are **substantially in compliance** on bridge inspections.

Slide 3

Scour Evaluations and Plan of Action for Scour Critical Bridges

- Recommendation: MDOT complete or ensure the completion of all scour evaluations and Plan of Action (POA) for scour critical bridges.

- Out of MDOT's 4,360 bridges on the state system, there are only 14 bridges that still need scour evaluations completed. These 14 bridges are being evaluated and **all** MDOT bridges will have completed scour evaluations by December 31, 2009.
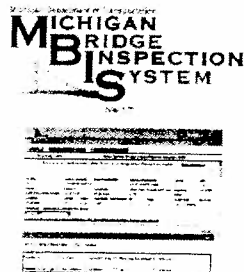
Scour Evaluations and Plan of Action for Scour Critical Bridges (Continued)

- Out of the 6.282 bridges on the local system, there are 985 bridges still needing scour evaluations to be completed. Right now, there are hundreds of evaluations being done on the local agency system. Nearly all local agencies have made commitments to complete the evaluations by December 31, 2009.

Scour Evaluations and POA for Scour Critical Bridges

- MDOT created a POA report within the Michigan Bridge Inspection System, which will allow all bridge owners to develop and implement a POA for all scour critical bridges by December 31, 2010.

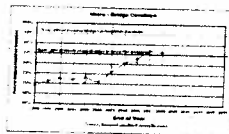MICHIGAN BRIDGE INSPECTION SYSTEM

Inspection Timeliness

- Recommendation: MDOT ensure that local bridge owners and MDOT regional offices complete routine bridge inspections and inspections of underwater structural elements of all bridges in a timely manner. MDOT document its follow-up activity or lack of follow-up activity related to late or potentially late bridge inspections.

- MDOT already has several programs and processes in place to facilitate timely inspection and MDOT is going to enhance that by doing the following:
  - Provide senior management inspection timeliness reports.
  - Further enhance the National Bridge Inspection Standards and Michigan Bridge Inspection System (MBIS) with inspection management tools.
  - Send automated e-mails to agencies when inspections are due.
  - Establish an as-needed contract to do inspections when an agency is exceedingly late.

Inspection Frequencies, Load Ratings, and Qualified Team Leader Comments

- Recommendation: Ensure that Qualified Team Leaders (QTLs) comply with MDOT's bridge inspection frequency guidelines at all times. MDOT regularly monitor the appropriateness of the bridge inspection frequencies and load ratings for bridges experiencing significant deterioration. MDOT ensure that QTLs adequately describe the physical deterioration of poorly rated bridges in MBIS.

- MDOT will provide bridge inspection reports to senior management regarding frequency and quality of inspections.

- MDOT will review possibilities to further enhance MBIS to facilitate use of appropriate comments on inspection reports.
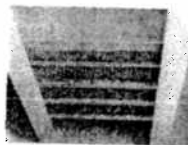

False Decking

- Recommendation: MDOT inspect the underside of bridges with false decking, and establish procedures requiring this inspection. MDOT ensure that all bridges with false decking are correctly identified. MDOT ensure that its QTLs correctly report their inspection results for bridges with false decking.

- False decking is placed to protect the safety of the motoring public.

- Less than 2% of MDOT's bridges have false decking.

False Decking (Continued)

- MDOT already has procedures in place to inventory and inspect bridges with false decking and will enhance these procedures as recommended by the audit.

- Metro Region has completed a detailed assessment of their bridges with false decking.

- MDOT is also a leader, according to the report, in developing a mesh false decking system to better view the underside of bridge decks where false decking is in place.

QTL Requirements

- Recommendation: Ensure that inspection team leaders meet state and federal QTL requirements.

- MDOT will develop a process to ensure the retention of all records pertaining to QTL qualification.

Questions?